

5. (Twice Amended) A composite product comprising the composite acellular product of claim 1, wherein at least one of the porous layer and of the compact membrane, comprises living cells selected from the group consisting of normal living cells, genetically modified living cells and malignant living cells.

9. (Twice Amended) A composite product forming a collagen support comprising at least one porous collagen layer covered on at least one side with a compact collagen membrane selected from the group consisting of a collagen film prepared by drying a collagen gel and a compressed collagen sponge prepared by a compression of a collagen sponge at a pressure of at least about 50 bar, said porous layer comprising living fibroblasts and said compact membrane comprising on the surface thereof living cells selected from the group consisting of keratinocytes, melanocytes, Merkel's cells originating from the blood, Langerhans' cells originating from the blood, sebocytes, cells originating from the blood, and nerve cells, the surface layer containing the living cells being cultivated while caused to emerge at the air-liquid interface of a compatible culture medium, while the porous layer containing the fibroblasts remains immersed during said cultivation step to give a reconstructed skin composed of a reconstructed dermis, comprising the fibroblasts having colonized the porous collagen layer forming a three dimensional matrix, said dermis being covered with a multilayer epidermis comprising said collagen membrane.

12. (Twice Amended) The product of claim 1, wherein the compact membrane is prepared prior to combination with the porous layer.

19. (Twice Amended) The product of claim 1, wherein at least one of the porous layer and compact membrane is produced from a collagen gel containing a mixture of soluble collagen and insoluble collagen, wherein the collagen is selected from the group consisting of type I collagen and type III collagen.

28. (Twice Amended) The process of claim 20, wherein at least one of the porous layer and compact membrane, are crosslinked.

34. (Twice Amended) The process of claim 20, wherein living cells are introduced into at least one of the porous layer or compact membrane.

61. (Amended) A composite product forming a collagen support comprising at least one porous collagen layer covered on at least one side with a compact collagen membrane selected from the group consisting of a collagen film prepared by drying a collagen gel and a compressed collagen sponge prepared by a compression of a collagen sponge at a pressure of at least about 50 bar, said porous layer comprising living cells and said compact membrane comprising on the surface thereof living cells, the membrane surface comprising the living cells being cultivated while caused to emerge at the air-liquid interface of a compatible culture medium, while the porous layer comprises the living cells remains immersed during said cultivation step to give a reconstructed skin composed of a reconstructed dermis, comprising the living cells having colonized the porous collagen layer forming a three dimensional matrix, said dermis being covered with a multilayer epidermis comprising said collagen membrane.

64. (Amended) The product of claim 61, wherein said living cells on the surface of the membrane comprise keratinocytes.

Remarks

Claims 1-20, 22-45 and 50-64 remain pending in the application. Claims 1, 3, 5, 9, 12, 19, 28, 34, 61, and 64 have been amended as shown above. The claims were amended to more fully clarify the invention. Specifically, the term "essentially" was removed from the phrase "essentially compact collagen membrane", and other terminology was changed to be consistent throughout. No new matter has been added by the amendments above. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested in light of the above amendments and the following comments.

Applicants would like to offer the following, which is meant to supplement the remarks made in the May 21, 2002 amendment.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-8, 10-20, 23-38, 40, 41, 42, 44, and 45 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,273,900 (Boyce).